

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-08

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NSC-05 NSCE-00 INR-05 CIAE-00

PM-03 DODE-00 SP-02 SAM-01 EURE-00 PRS-01 /040 W

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P 301718Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0695

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY BONN

S E C R E T LONDON 06526

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PARM MBFR

SUBJECT: OPTION III - BRITISH COMMENTS ON US PAPER

1. TICKELL CALLED US THIS AFTERNOON TO SAY THAT WORKING LEVEL COMMENTS ON US PAPER ON OPTION III HAVE BEEN FORWARDED TO MINISTERS IN FCO AND MOD FOR THEIR APPROVAL. HE HOPED THAT "EARLY NEXT WEEK" BRITISH WOULD BE IN A POSITION TO GIVE US FULLY COORDINATED REACTION TO US PAPER. HE STRESSED IN PARTICULAR HIS HOPE THAT THE US WOULD NOT SUBMIT PAPER UNTIL WE HAD RECEIVED BRITISH COMMENT (EMBASSY COMMENT: TICKELL APPARENTLY HAD INDICATIONS FROM UK NATO THAT US PAPER MIGHT BE TABLED SOON).

2. TICKELL SAID THAT IF MINISTERS ACCEPT HIS RECOMMENDATIONS THE BRITISH WILL GIVE US COMMENTS ON THE FOLLOWING MATTERS:

A) WHAT OPTION III IS INTENDED TO BUY.

B) PROCEDURE FOR HANDLING OPTION III IN NAC. HE SAID THAT UK WANTS ADEQUATE PROVISION FOR TECHNICAL DISCUSSION AND PREFERS THE MBFR WORKING GROUP AS THE FORUM. HOWEVER, IF THE US RESISTS THIS IDEA, AS HE EXPECTS WE WILL, THE BRITISH STILL THINK IT IS NECESSARY

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TO FIND SOME EXPERT FORUM SO THAT THE SPC WILL NOT BE

UNDULY BURDENED.

C) BILATERAL US-SOVIET CONTACT BEFORE TABLING OF
OPTION III AT VIENNA.

3. THE BRITISH EXPECT TO RESERVE THEIR POSITION ON
CEILINGS AND CONSTRAINTS UNTIL US PAOER HAS BEEN PRE-
SENTED TO THE NAC. THEY ARE NOT ENTIRELY HAPPY WITH OUR
TREATMENT OF THESE TWO TOPICS BUT HAVE NOT YET THEMSELVES
DEVELOPED A POSITION.

4. TICKELL EXPLAINED THAT BRITISH HOPE THEIR COMMENTS
WILL PERSUADE US TO MAKE A FEW CHANGES IN PAPER BEFORE
NAC CONSIDERATION AND THUS MINIMIZE ARGUMENTS IN
BRUSSELS, ALTHOUGH SOME DIFFERENCES WITH THE US WILL
PROBABLY BE UNAVOIDABLE. CONCLUDING, TICKELL SAID, THAT
IN REVIEWING THE US PAPER IN THE LIGHT OF US-UK-FRG
DISCUSSIONS OVER THE PAST YEAR HE WAS STRUCK BY THE LARGE
MEASURE OF AGREEMENT AMONG THE THREE OF US.

RICHARDSON

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: COLLECTIVE SECURITY, PAPERS, GOVERNMENT REACTIONS, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION, OPTION III
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 30 APR 1975
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: CunninFX
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975LONDON06526
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: X1
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750151-1114
From: LONDON
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t1975044/aaaaadcp.tel
Line Count: 82
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CunninFX
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 09 APR 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <09 APR 2003 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <16 SEP 2003 by CunninFX>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: OPTION III - BRITISH COMMENTS ON US PAPER
TAGS: PARM, UK, US, MBFR
To: STATE BONN
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006